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MANCHESTER  
LITERARY  
CLUB.

By JOHN  
H. SWANN

1908.











*Photo by Lafayette.*

**GEORGE MILNER, ESQ., M.A., J.P.**  
*(President of the Manchester Literary Club).*

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# MANCHESTER LITERARY CLUB.

SOME NOTES ON  
ITS HISTORY  
1862———1908.

By JOHN H. SWANN

WITH REMINISCENCES OF  
THE CHRISTMAS SUPPERS  
By JOHN MORTIMER

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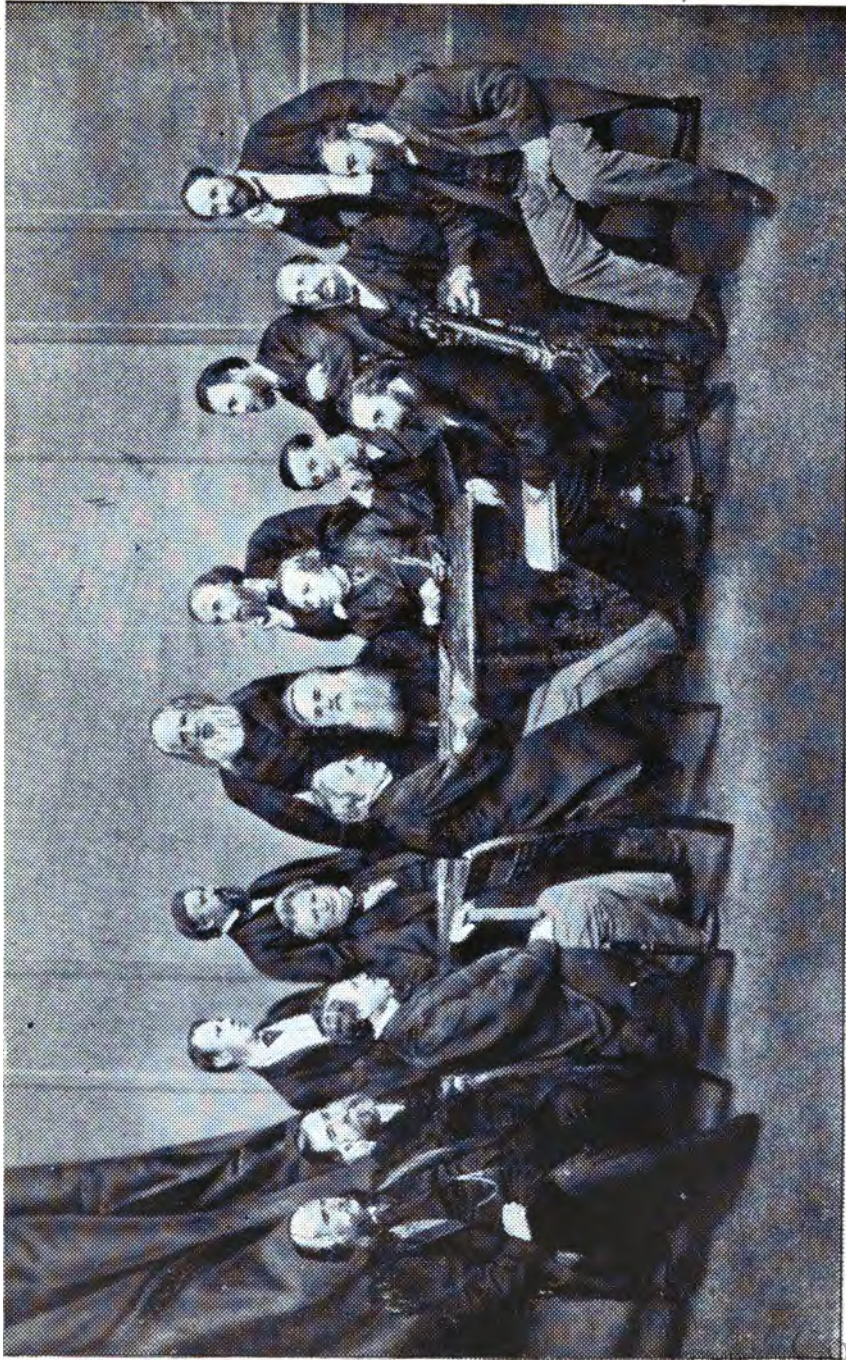
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*Milner at Milner*

[THE ensuing articles, revised and enlarged, are reprinted from the "Manchester City News" of January 25th, February 1st, 8th, and 15th, 1908. The writer desires to acknowledge, with many sincere thanks, his indebtedness to Mr. George Milner, Mr. W. E. A. Axon, Mr. John Mortimer, and others whose reminiscences embodied in papers and speeches printed in the Club's "Papers" have been of invaluable assistance, and to Mr. J. Cuming Walters for help rendered in publication. Further thanks are also due to Mr. Mortimer for permission to include his article on the Christmas Suppers ("City News," December 21st, 1907). The portraits of members of the Council, inserted in the text, are from photographs by Mr. C. Ireland, Lower Mosley Street, Manchester; others are from photographs in possession of the Club.]



SAML. SMITH.  
EDWIN WAUGH.

CHAS. POTTER.  
F. TRACHSEL.  
RICH'D. R. BEALEY.

DAVID MORRIS.  
C. SWAIN.  
RICH'D. R. BEALEY.

T. T. WILKINSON, SAML. BAMFORD.  
WM. RICHARDSON, J. HARLAND.  
J. P. STOKES.

A. G. HENDERSON.  
CHAS. HARDWICK.  
JNO. PAGE.

JOS. CHATTWOOD.

# A LITERARY CLUB GROUP. c. 1867-68.



# Manchester Literary Club.

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## I.

"Is Edwin forgot? Nay, 'tis not so, I wot!  
(Let's gi'e credit t' 'them as belongs')  
Ben 'w' his pins, an' his wellers to th' shins'?  
All their cracks and their jokes and their songs!  
Sam Bamford and Swain, they are gone—they remain!  
(And 'tis ours to remember their claims).  
Harland, Hardwick, and Page, and Joe Chattwood the sage,  
In our annals embalmed are their names."

Club Song (T. Newbigging).

To refer to the Manchester Literary Club as a "literary society" is to betray an ignorance of its distinctive features. The Club has, of course, its rules, its printed syllabus, and its reading of papers; but beyond these there is the subtle charm which arises from the combination of a love of literature and art with a "clubable" spirit of fellowship and sympathy. Then the Club has its traditions going back almost for half a century; traditions which are embodied in the goodly row of volumes of "Papers," in the memories of its oldest members, and in the portraits which look down from the club-room walls on the meetings of to-day.

The prime object of the Club is to encourage the pursuit of literature and art, and though in seeking election the would-be member is understood to have a real interest in those subjects, membership is by no means confined to professional literary men and artists. The main body of its members consists of men engaged in business, who, however, are genuinely interested in literature as a humanising influence and as a source of true pleasure. It is to this fact that, as Mr. W. E. A. Axon has well said, "in the publications of the Club there is an undimmed enthusiasm and the charm of spontaneousness that arises from a genuine and, so to speak, unprofessional love of literature."

It is an ideal of the Club that in the midst of a great commercial city "it is to do what it can to keep the mind of the city true to the higher and more unselfish forms of mental



activity, to see that the 'humanities' hold their ground along with science and material considerations."

On the covers of some of the earliest volumes of the "Papers" there is a medallion portrait of Dr. Samuel Johnson. In spirit, if not in actual fact, the Club claims affinity with that famous Literary Club over which the Doctor presided, and also with the glorious gatherings of still earlier times at the Mermaid and Apollo Taverns. In Manchester the Club had its predecessors in the literary meetings held at the Sun Inn (or Poets' Corner), and in the Review Club, which existed between 1854 and 1861. Some of the Literary Club founders were members of the Review Club, and others joined later, including Mr. John Angell, who still attends the meetings.

It was in the autumn of 1862 that the Literary Club came into being; the Cathedral Hotel was its birthplace, and the founders were Joseph Chattwood, Edwin Waugh, John Page, Richard Rome Bealey, Ben Brierley, and Charles Hardwick. Apparently the idea of the Club originated with Hardwick, Waugh, and Chattwood, and from a letter of Brierley's it would appear that the Savage Club formed a model. "Cheerfulness," says Mr. John Mortimer, "has always been a distinguishing note of this Club. It was founded by cheerful men, and with the growing years the freshness of the early time is in a large measure still maintained."

No records are available for the first three years of the Club's existence, but from 1865 the minute books are extant. In 1872 the first printed record appeared, and it gives an outline of the Club's doings from 1865. From its pages one gathers that after the first session recorded when certain papers were read, the members must have indulged rather in informal talk and social recreation than in set literary work; indeed, for 1868-1869 we read "No papers appear to have been read." We get a side-light from another source: "The writings of these men appeared in the newspapers of the time, and at the meetings of the Club the members criticised each other's work with a frankness hardly known to-day." There is this further glimpse in the first printed report (1871-72): "Those who remember the old meetings in Mr. Batty's library (Cathedral Hotel) will have pleasant recollections. When Bamford was still vigorous; when John

Harland was in the full prime of his rich, active, and scholarly intellect; when Charles Swain was an almost regular attender, diffusing a fragrant atmosphere of poesy; when science was represented by Trchsel, history and archæology by Wilkinson, Hardwick, and Smith, and music by Henderson; when Waugh had won his spurs as the Burns of Lancashire, and frequently delighted the Club by readings of his new songs; when Ab-o'th'-Yate first made his reform speech; when Whittaker (the Lancashire Lad) was winning his way to a position in the ranks of literature; and when, in addition, Bealey, Batty, Morris, Felix Folio (John Page), Cameron, and others met under the rule of our respected President, there were meetings which remain in the memories of many as bright spots in the past."

Since those days the Club has had various homes, including the Cathedral Hotel, the Mitre, the Clarence, the Palatine, the Grosvenor, and (in 1884) the Grand, where on Monday evenings during the session (October to March), the meetings are still held. Of the "Mitre" days, Mr. John Mortimer has told us: "A spice of harmless Bohemianism entered into the Club proceedings. One recalls the friendly faces gathered around the shining mahogany, the primitive long clay pipes, the cheerful fires, and the sound of the Cathedral bells close by." Pipes are still in evidence, but they are not "churchwardens"! The Cathedral bells, though they may have blended with the talk, apparently did not improve music, for at a certain Club conversazione at the Palatine Hotel the president (Mr. Milner) was moved to use his ecclesiastical authority to have the ringing suspended for that evening. Retailers of "chestnuts" in the early days were not encouraged, for a repeated story was received with the deference due to its age by all the members round the table rising to their feet. Sir Jas. W. Southern, who recalled that incident when speaking at a Christmas Supper of the Club, also told of a paper read by a well-known member, a clever Manchester journalist, Mr. Henry Franks, on the causes of English drunkenness. Pointing out that while there was a greater consumption of alcohol per head in other nations yet intoxication was more common in England, his explanation was: "It is because of the teetotalers; they don't drink their share, consequently, those who do drink, drink more than their share."

On another occasion, when a paper on "Spiritualism" had been read, four members sat at a table for half-an-hour and endeavoured to obtain manifestations, but the atmosphere must have been too critical, for there was no response.

The first printed "transactions" consists of a slender reprint of "City News" reports of papers read during the session of 1873-74. It was in 1875 that the first of the substantial volumes of "Papers" which remain as permanent memorials of the Club's activities was issued. The first six volumes, 1875 to 1880, appeared under the editorial care of Mr. J. H. Nodal; he was succeeded by Mr. W. E. A. Axon, who continued the work until 1886, when the present editor, Mr. W. R. Credland, took charge. In 1882 the Club began the publication of "The Manchester Quarterly," one of the few distinctly literary periodicals now issued. Its contents, literary and artistic, are entirely the work of members, and it has frequently won appreciative tributes from critical sources. It is published, as the title implies, quarterly, and the price is sixpence. Through the generosity of Councillor W. Butterworth and Mr. Edward Hinners (who bore respectively the cost of compilation and printing) there is now a printed "Index" to the "Papers" from the beginning to 1902; a work which has been invaluable to the present writer.

As even a literary club cannot flourish without capable officers, the long-continued success of the Club shows that it has been fortunate in those who have been responsible for its management and direction.

The first president was Mr. Joseph Chattwood, who was also, as we have seen, one of the founders. Though of a scientific turn of mind, Mr. Chattwood liked the society of literary men and had a considerable interest in literature. Precise of speech, as became one who was an arbitrator, he was tactful, possessed of an imposing presence, and self-confident. Mr. Newbigging, referring to him says, "He needed all his tact and his strict disciplinary methods in those early days of the Club, for there was often a strong tendency to drift off into rollicking fun amongst the members. . . . When the president did give the reins to the coursers and the fun became fast and furious, as was not infrequently the case, Chattwood would throw off his frigid, parental manner, and was one of the wildest spirits of the hour." Added to his portly presence was a broad-

brimmed hat, and it is not surprising that at various times he was mistaken for a bishop. "Warm-hearted and eminently friendly," he continued in office until 1874, and in the next year he died. He would seem to have had a special interest in Shakspeare, for among his contributions to the Club were papers on "Did Shakspeare draw all his characters from the English?" "Shakspeare's Powers of Expression," and "Which is the most respectable character in 'The Merchant of Venice'?"

The second president was Mr. John Howard Nodal, who joined the Club in 1869, and was a vice-president. Mr. Nodal was elected in 1874, and the influence of the new president was not long in making itself felt. There was a general bracing-up and



MR. J. H. NODAL.

a considerable development of the Club's activities. As a prominent journalist of uncommon ability, and the successful editor of the "City News," Mr. Nodal's intellectual interests were wide and were bound to have a broadening influence on the Club's affairs and to make for increased seriousness of purpose. The "Papers," as we have noted, began to be published during his term of office and under his editorship. Among the president's contributions bibliographical topics and book-lore are prominent, and the cognate subject of libraries is also to the

fore. His special work on the dialect and on Lancashire and Cheshire artists will be referred to later. Mr. Nodal is ex-president of the Club at the present time. He resigned his presidentship in 1878, and, as Mr. John Mortimer has said, he "with far-sighted wisdom nominated his successor." The Club was also far-sighted in its wisdom in accepting his nominee, for it was Mr. George Milner upon whom their choice fell. Mr. Milner had been a vice-president from 1873, and from 1879 the meetings have been held under his beneficent presidential rule. Without doubt the Club has a large place in the President's affections, and it is also obvious that towards him the members entertain a feeling far beyond mere admiration. Whenever a fitting occasion offers, say at the annual election of officers or the Christmas Supper, the Club's affection for its President, who has more than upheld its finest traditions, is shown in unmistakable fashion. Mr. Milner's example is one that makes the spirit of the Club most delightful, ensuring a genial and friendly atmosphere, encouraging alike to old and new members. So, too, he has given convincing proof that diligence in business and arduous public work are not necessarily enemies of the quiet mind able to enjoy and make noble use of the great treasures of literature. Booklovers and lovers of nature at home and abroad hold in high estimation his delightful "Country Pleasures," and he has made further welcome additions to our bookshelves in his "Studies of Nature on the Coast of Arran" and his volume of poems "From Dawn to Dusk." "Who amongst us," says Mr. Newbigging, "but admires the fertility and wealth of resource which he brings to bear out of his well-stored mind in the conduct of the business of the Club; his tact and rich good-temper in administration, and the ability and power which he displays in focussing all the points of literary discussion?" Many delightful papers he has read before the Club, wherein, with intimate knowledge, he has discoursed of poets and prose writers, of various phases of literature, and of other matters of like nature. The twentieth year of his presidentship and the seventieth year of his age were celebrated on March 9, 1900, by a dinner in the club-room, and these words from the address then presented may be fitly quoted here:—"By your impartiality, dignity, judgment, and unvarying courtesy (as President) the Manchester Literary Club has been raised to a position of marked distinction."

The roll of vice-presidents of the Club records many well-known names. Those at present holding office are : Sir W. H. Bailey, Sir H. H. Howorth, Messrs. John Angell, Edgar Attkins, W. E. A. Axon, J. F. L. Crosland, Henry Gannon, Richard Hooke, Thomas Kay, John Mortimer, Thomas Newbigging, B. A. Redfern, and Charles W. Sutton. The acting vice-president is Mr. John Mortimer. Loyal readers of the "City News" will need no reminder of how true a lover of nature and books, especially of the poets, Mr. Mortimer is. He has his own charming way of relating what he sees and what he thinks when taking his walks amid country scenes or seeking his well-loved friends of the book-shelves. A responsible



**MR. JOHN MORTIMER**  
(Vice-President).



**MR. W. R. CREDLAND**  
(Hon. Secretary).

commercial post has not made him forget the path to where poetry and nature's quiet beauty are revealed to those whose hearts do not grow old with the years. The Club's proceedings have had from him many contributions, sympathetic and appreciative studies of our poets and other writers, and countryside sketches in which poetry and nature-lore are commingled. Then there are further the delightful character sketches, so discerning and so full of kindly human feeling, in which he has depicted certain past and present members of the Club, such as "Our Scholar-Gipsy" [C. E. Tyrer], "Our Bursar" [J. C. Lockhart], "Our Scribe" [Mr. W. Credland], and others.



The first of the hon. treasurers was Mr. Charles Hardwick, affectionately known as "Ancient Charley," for he was a lover of the things of old, as his "History of Preston," "Traditions and Folk-lore of Lancashire," and "The Ancient Battlefields of Lancashire" show. His "Manual of Friendly Societies" serves to remind us of valuable services rendered in that direction, particularly as regards the Oddfellows, whose magazine he for a long time edited. He used to recite the verses of his friend, Eliza Cook, beginning "Here's Merry Christmas come again," at each Christmas Supper, and he was a great talker. Edwin Waugh, with humorous exaggeration, told of occupying the same bedroom one night with him, and falling asleep whilst Hardwick was talking, he awoke next morning to find the monologue still in progress. Mr. Hardwick's term of office was from 1871 to 1875, and when he died in 1889 he bequeathed certain books to the Club and also the copyright of his "Traditions and Folk-lore of Lancashire."

Mr. Joseph C. Lockhart was the next treasurer, and he held the post until 1888. His portrait, painted and presented by Mr. Reginald Barber, also a member of the Club, hangs in the club-room. As treasurer, it has been said of him that in receiving the guineas he seemed to confer a favour upon those who parted with them, so courteous was his manner. He was a singer, and in ballad or song his voice was heard on occasions when music added its note to the Club's proceedings, and he was possessed, likewise, of a vein of humour. "Those who can appreciate Lancashire humour expressed in folk-speech," says Mr. Mortimer, "should read his story of 'The Man with the Iron Mask,' and if you like to see how this humour can be blended with the finest susceptibilities of human nature you should read also his essay on 'Bad Lads.'" He made a famous Chief Cook at the Christmas Suppers; as such, carrying in the boar's head. An address and a purse of gold marked the Club's esteem when he resigned the treasurership. That was in June, 1899; in the following month he had passed away.

His successor, and the present holder of the post, is Mr. Charles W. Sutton. As Chief Librarian of the Manchester Public Free Libraries, Mr. Sutton's name is assuredly a "household word" in Manchester and district, but beyond his official reputation he is widely known for his work in the spreading

of literary and bibliographical knowledge. For the Spenser Society, the Chetham Society, the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, he has done much valuable work; the great "Dictionary of National Biography" had him as a contributor, and in conjunction with Canon Raines he wrote the "Life of Humphrey Chetham." Many indeed are the books in which grateful acknowledgment is made of his ready help given to the authors in their researches. His special work for the Club will be noted later, but let it be said here that, though he sits at the receipt of custom, he is deep in the Club's affectionate regard.

The first honorary secretary, so far as the records show, was Mr. Richard Rome Bealey, one of the founders of the Club, and the author of several volumes of pleasant verse, "After-Business Jottings," "Field Flowers and City Chimes," &c. Some of his writings are in the dialect, and of these "Eawr Bessy" is probably the best known. Mr. Bealey is said to have been an inveterate punster, and at a conversazione in 1875 he "caused much amusement by his graphic and humorous representation of a Frenchman's lecture on Shakspeare." He became secretary in 1865 and resigned in 1870. In the later years of his life he lived in Nottingham, where he died in 1887, a few months after having been elected an honorary member of the Club. Mr. John Higson Haworth followed next as secretary, and he carried on the work until 1875. In the annual report for 1878-79 his death is referred to, and it is said of him that "he was a contributor to newspapers and periodicals on many subjects, his treatment of which was distinguished by much studious research and accuracy of statement." In a discussion at the Club in 1874 on the Reference Library he protested against a proposal to banish it to the top rooms of the new Town Hall, and said "that within a few years after the new Town Hall was occupied it would be too small for the municipal business," a prophecy which time has proved correct.

Mr. W. E. A. Axon next took up the secretarial duties, and, from 1875 to 1878, fulfilled them with energy and ability. The growth of the Club's work and influence is a striking testimony to the combined efforts of a president like Mr. Nodal and a secretary such as Mr. Axon. His appetite for work has always been robust, and some remarks made concerning him in 1887 apply now with added force: "It would take all night even to give a

list of the books and papers that he has written, of the magazines to which he has contributed or which he has edited; of the societies—local, English, and European—of which he is a member. And what is surprising is that nothing seems to come amiss to him." Archæology, local history, statistics, folk-lore, poetry, bibliography, translations from many languages, biography, art—these are some of the fields in which he has laboured, and they are well represented in the numerous papers read by him before the Club. It should also be added that he can make a delightful speech, and he has done much good work for social reform in various directions. We may note among his



MR. W. E. A. AXON.

many writings the more extensive works, which include "Lancashire Gleanings," "Cheshire Gleanings," "Echoes of Old Lancashire," and the much-used "Annals of Manchester." In 1878 the Literary Club and the Manchester Statistical Society joined in a "golden" testimonial to Mr. Axon, and both institutions were recognising the valuable services of an esteemed honorary secretary in making the presentation.

Mr. George Evans succeeded Mr. Axon as secretary, and carried on the work until 1886. Though but a rare contributor to the "Papers," Mr. Evans could wield both pen and pencil.

In the volume for 1888 there is a facsimile of a letter read at a Christmas Supper at which he was unable to be present, in which he has sketched the President and his supporters at the supper table and himself giving elsewhere a public reading, the cause of his absence. Mr. Evans had considerable vogue as an elocutionist and reader, and, being skilled in organisation, the Club's excursions and conversaciones were special features of his secretarial work. Upon his resignation an illuminated address and purse of gold were presented to him "as a token of esteem and regard for his personal character and in recognition of the very able and courteous manner in which he



**MR. GEORGE EVANS.**

has discharged the onerous duties of secretary." He died in 1890 at the age of fifty-four. He collected materials for a Life of John Leech, which, however, remains unwritten, and organised a movement to raise £500, with which sum one hundred and fifty original drawings by Leech were purchased for Manchester and fifty for Nottingham.

Following Mr. Evans's resignation we read in the annual report that "Mr. W. R. Credland, at the request of the Council, undertook to discharge the secretarial duties till the end of the session." That was in 1886. Mr. Credland is still discharging the duties, and it is the Club's hope that the end of the

" session " is yet a long way off. In April, 1907, the close of twenty-one years' service was marked by the presentation of an address and a purse of gold, and in 1899 a characteristic portrait of the secretary, painted by Mr. Reginald Barber and purchased by subscription, was added to the Club's pictured memorials " They thought it an honour to have such a secretary," Mr. Milner said on that occasion, " and were proud to see his portrait on their walls. They knew him not only as a secretary, but as a good fellow, a clubable man, a loyal and generous friend." As Manchester's Deputy Chief Librarian, Mr. Credland spends his days amid thousands of volumes, but he has not been deterred



**MR. WILLIAM DINSMORE.**

thereby from adding to their number. His " Days Off " is a series of chatty sketches of holiday jaunts, and he has produced an elaborate " History and Description of the Manchester Public Free Libraries." His pen, too, can command some well-turned verses, and in prose or verse the gleam of humour is usually in its track. The " Papers " bear evidence that he has found time amid secretarial and editorial labours to add contributions to the Club's proceedings, and when he reads a paper it is good to be there.

The Club also has its Steward, whose function it is to act as a sort of genial lubricant, in seeing to the comfort of the

assembled members, and helping new members to find their bearings.

Mr. William Dinsmore is affectionately remembered in that capacity, and also as a vice-president. He was seventy-eight years of age when he died in May, 1907, and there passed with him a wonderful store of interesting memories of literature, art, and drama in Manchester. His contributions on sundry poets, Lancashire authors, and on topics of art and nature have more than a touch of a kindly sentiment and genuine appreciation. Professionally he was an artist-lithographer and a clever pen-draughtsman; many Club programs, menus, &c., were graced with his designs. In 1904 his golden wedding was celebrated, and he was taken by surprise when, in the Club, a presentation



**MR. J. H. BROCKLEHURST.**



**MR. T. DERBY.**

in honour of the event was made, bringing from him some touching words. His successor is Mr. W. Bagshaw, who links the traditions of his office to an interest (expressed in sundry effective papers) in Mr. George Bernard Shaw and other types of modernity. He, however, disclaims responsibility to the Club for all Mr. Shaw's eccentricities, present and to come! Mention should also be made of the Club's library, the chief feature of which is the collection of members' publications. The present librarians are Mr. J. H. Brocklehurst and Mr. T. Derby.

The administrative business of the Club is managed by a Council consisting of the officers and seven other members. The first Council was elected in 1873.



## II.

The Literary Club is now in its forty-sixth annual session, and the array of volumes of "Papers," constituting the material remains of hundreds of delightful evenings, is overawing to the would-be chronicler of the Club's doings. How can one even suggest what has been? For it is one thing to read a paper as printed and quite another to hear it read by its writer, with the unrecorded asides, the interpretative modulations of voice, the contagious spirit of enthusiasm, or the convincing tone of conviction. These things have been and are; we can but indicate some of those whose work and personality have made them memorable in the Club's history, call attention to the main lines of its development and interests, and leave the reader's imagination to fill in the rest.

In the earliest sessions antiquarian, scientific, and philosophical papers were more frequent than now. The founding of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society in 1883 diverted to a more suitable field papers of a purely archæological and antiquarian interest, especially as many members of the Club are also on the Society's list of members. Messrs. W. E. A. Axon, H. T. Crofton, G. Pearson, and C. W. Sutton have occupied the Society's presidential chair, and its founder and honorary secretary, Mr. George C. Yates, F.S.A., whose old-time researches seem to have included the discovery of the secret of perpetual youth, is also a Club member. Mr. John Eglington Bailey, F.S.A., was a distinguished antiquarian member from 1874 to 1885. Among much work of careful research, which included an elaborate life of "quaint old Fuller" and the editing and partial writing of the "Palatine Note Book," Mr. Bailey contributed papers to the Club on Dr. John Dee, Dr. John Byrom, Dr. Whitaker, "the Cipher of Pepys's 'Diary,'" and other subjects. Mr. H. T. Crofton, in various papers, supplied some curious information upon the life and lore of gipsies. Mr. John Evans, whose edition of Canon Parkinson's "Old Church Clock" with its informing preface is valued, had an apparently inexhaustible store of local

information, especially of matters ecclesiastical and theatrical. He was a phenomenal talker, and the flow of reminiscence was only measured by the exigencies of time and circumstance. His papers, read before the Club during a membership from 1875 to 1882, include among their subjects "The Early Days of W. Harrison Ainsworth," "Henry Crabtree, astrologer and almanack maker," and (the most noteworthy) "Manchester Theatrical Reminiscences" (1841-1860). In recent years Mr. Thomas Swindells, author of "Manchester Streets and Manchester Men," has contributed several papers full of interesting and valuable details of old Manchester and its more prominent inhabitants.

The Club has never lacked scientists, though technical contributions have been few. In the early days Mr. F. Trachsel was uncompromisingly scientific, his papers being on such topics as "Gunpowder the Civiliser," "The Origin of Carbon," "Creation," and "Flying Machines." Mr. John Ellor Taylor, whose "half-hour" books on geological and botanical subjects have been very widely read and whose career is an inspiring record of successful personal endeavour, was a member from 1866 to 1895. Mr. John Angell, a member since 1877, is the special champion of science in the Club, for it has been the important work of his life to "train the intellect through the study of science," and the record of his teaching is a notable one. He has brought before the notice of the Club "The New Psychology," "The Influence of Physical Science," "Ruskin Economics," "George Combe," and other topics. A familiar name to readers of the "City News" in former years was that of Mr. Morgan Brierley, the historian of Saddleworth and writer on meteorology, mathematics, and travel. To him the Club is indebted for, among other contributions, two important papers, on "Earlier English Mathematicians" and "Lancashire Mathematicians." Philosophy is particularly represented by Sir Henry H. Howorth, politician, historian of the Mongols, geologist, traveller in strange lands, teller of good stories, and an old member and vice-president of the Club. His contributions include weighty papers on "The Suicidal Character of Hume's Philosophy," "The Hopeless Problem of Metaphysics," and "The Idealism of Berkeley," but the Club's sincere appreciation of his genial nature did not falter, as may

be gathered from the account of the Christmas Supper in 1886, when Sir Henry and Mr. Newbigging (united as clubmen though divided in politics) were the guests of the evening. The honour of knighthood seems to carry with it the faculty for telling good stories, for another member who has been so honoured, Sir W. H. Bailey, though he has read papers on such diverse subjects as inventors and Montaigne, evolution and open spaces, usually has a trail of hearty laughter in his wake when he speaks. One of the most humorous of Christmas Supper speeches (and humour is generally rampant then) was that made in 1904 by Sir James W. Southern, whose membership dates



EDWIN WAUGH.

back to 1874, but whose extensive and absorbing public services have, without doubt, robbed the Club of a valued contributor to its "Papers."

The Lancashire dialect has always been of special interest to the Club, particularly when Edwin Waugh and Ben Brierley, those masters of dialect writing, were members. When in 1875, Mr. T. T. Wilkinson brought out a new and enlarged edition of Mr. John Harland's collection of "Ballads and Songs of

Lancashire " he dedicated it to the Literary Club. The progress of modern education inevitably tends to drive out the use of dialect—the survival of the speech of our ancestors of centuries ago. A praiseworthy endeavour to preserve some ordered record of it was begun by the Club in 1872, when, on Mr. Nodal's initiative, a committee of nine members was appointed with a view to the compilation of a glossary of the Lancashire dialect. The task proved more arduous than had been anticipated; eventually Messrs. Nodal and Milner were made joint editors, and in their hands the work progressed. The first part of the " Glossary " appeared in 1875 and the second in 1882.



BEN BRIERLEY ("Ab-o'th'-Yate").

A third part concerned with the history, grammar, literature, and pronunciation was projected, but has not so far appeared. When, in 1894, Professor Joseph Wright began his labours on the great "English Dialect Dictionary," in response to his appeal a committee of the Club was appointed to render aid, and in this connection Mr. Samuel Warburton, who joined the Club in 1874, has been a notable worker.

Contributions by Waugh and Brierley to the "Papers" are few, but what may be termed their "unprinted contributions"

are very pleasant memories to their contemporaries. Edwin Waugh's personality inspired affection in all who knew him. "Bless his dear old heart," Mr. T. R. Wilkinson once wrote, "I see him before me, that sturdy, square-set frame, encased in garments vast and solid—which no doubt stand upright of themselves at night when he has extricated himself from them. The dear old boy generally carries a section of pine forest as a walking-stick." Waugh's singing of certain of his old songs, such as "Th' sweetheart gate" or "When drowsy daylight's drooping e'e," was something that got right home to the heart of the listener. Then there was his story-telling; with the twinkle of the eye and the sidelong glance, suggestive of coming fun, when his hearers would be "almost suffocated with insupportable laughter." When Mr. George Milner edited a new edition of Waugh's writings in 1892 he read the introductory estimate and biographical sketch of Waugh before the Club. At the conclusion are these words: "His books, like his bodily presence and his better self, are conspicuously clean and healthy. His real work may be estimated by the number of those who loved him when living and who honour him now that he has gone."

Waugh wrote of the moorland and its hardy folk; Ben Brierley depicted the life of the hand-loom weavers, shrewd men and women of marked character. Lancashire owes a deep debt of gratitude to these two writers, for they have left for all who come after true realisations of men and women who, whatever their faults, were "gradely folk." It is hugely refreshing to turn from the "problem" writers of to-day to the sane common-sense and healthy humanity of "Ab-o'th'-Yate's" and Edwin Waugh's best writings. When Brierley returned from a long holiday in America in 1885 he gave the Club some results of his observations of that country in a paper entitled "Yankee Sketches." The occasion was marked by a very unusual departure from the Club's procedure, for, though it was an ordinary meeting, "there was a large attendance of ladies." To refer to a member's popularity in the Club after noting that fact would be superfluous. After such a triumph it is not surprising to discover further that Ben Brierley is, so far, the only member of the Club who has been honoured with a public statue. The work of the clever chisel of a former member, Mr. John Cassidy, it stands in Queen's Park.

Another well-known member in the early days to whom a public memorial has been erected was Samuel Bamford, the author of "Passages in the Life of a Radical" and other works, reformer, poet and weaver. He has the further distinction of being one of the two members\* of the Club who have been imprisoned for their political opinions. Mrs. Gaskell once heard him recite with much feeling a portion of Tennyson's "Dream of Fair Women," and mentioned the incident to the poet, who



SAMUEL LAYCOCK.

thereupon sent an inscribed copy of his poems to Bamford. That interesting volume was shown at a meeting of the Club in 1886 by Mr. J. C. Lockhart. In Mr. James Dronsfield's "Incidents and Anecdotes of the late Samuel Bamford" we are told how Mr. Milner, living near to the old reformer in his latter days, would go over to his cottage to read to him; Tennyson's "Idylls of the King" finding special favour. "As Mr. Milner read the poems in a half chant Bamford would sit with his hand hollowed against his ear so that not a word might be missed,

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\* The other was Dr. Adolph Samelson, a well-known member of the Club from 1875 to 1887. He suffered imprisonment in the country of his birth (Germany) for his political outspokenness.

and never failed, when the finer passages were reached, to note them and to ejaculate with a kindling face, 'Aye, aye; that's grand, that's grand!'"

Another writer of the dialect and a member of the Club was Samuel Laycock, who wrote "Bowtun's Yard" and "An Ode to th' Sun," among many other things full of cheery humour and heartening words. The daughter whose advent was the inspiration of his "Welcome, Bonny Brid!" is the wife of another member, Mr. Sim Schofield, who has contributed to the "Papers" reminiscences of Waugh, Brierley, and Laycock and an amusing account of an uneasy journey up and down the Great



MR. HENRY GANNON.

Pyramid. He has also written a book on Failsworth folk, and can make a Lancashire audience's sides ache.

Mr. Henry Gannon has, on more than one occasion, shod "a German clown in Lancashire clogs" by translating songs from Fitz Reuter into the dialect, and he has made other contributions in dialect. The Club has also had from him translations from Heine, Brinckmann, and Edmondo de Amicis, with a paper on the latter writer.

### III.

An examination of the volumes of the Club's "Papers" shows that the fair realm of English literature has been extensively explored by the members. Nor has attention been solely directed to the great masters of poetry and prose; it is a good feature of the Club's work that writers, undeservedly yet partly forgotten, are occasionally considered. Sometimes an evening is devoted to a single author, aspects of whose life, work and period are the subjects of perhaps half-a-dozen short papers. Thus there have been choice evenings dedicated to Chaucer, Spenser, Dryden, Goldsmith, Burns, Shelley, Browning, George Eliot, Ruskin, and Petrarch. The mention of the latter poet implies that the Club is not content to confine its interest to English writers, and such is the case. Indeed in 1897 a Foreign Literature Section, meeting on a separate evening, was commenced, but only lived through three sessions. Yet some good work was done by various contributors, including Messrs. A. Schumacher, J. F. L. Sandbach, J. Angeloff, and K. Funduklian. Among the authors discussed were Ibsen, Vazoff, Heine, Jokai, Björnson, Baudelaire, and Jeanne Marni, and several of the papers were afterwards read at the Club's ordinary meetings.

Portuguese literature has its advocate in Mr. Edgar Prestage, whose attainments have brought him a Portuguese royal mark of distinction. He has contributed papers on "Eça de Queiroz," "Manoel de Mello," and "Portuguese Drama in the Sixteenth Century." Many book-lovers treasure his charming translation of that literary gem, "The Sweet Miracle" by Queiroz.

Mr. Edmund Mercer, in addition to papers on various English authors, including several local writers such as Ben Brierley and Geraldine E. Jewsbury, has produced a notable series, written with crisp, epigrammatic touch and critical certainty, on French writers of the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, and so far he has dealt with Villon, Cyrano de Bergerac, La Bruyère, Brantôme, Lesage, Madame de Sévigné, Guillaume Colletet, and the Salon "Rambouillet." Councillor



Walter Butterworth has also found inspiration among foreign authors of note, and has given to the Club the fruits of his studies of Corneille, Camoens, Boccaccio, Tasso, Carducci, D'Annunzio, and Maeterlinck. In addition to consorting with that distinguished company he has adventured with Spenser in the enchanted realms of the "Faerie Queene," walked in the stately "Arcadia" of Sir Philip Sidney, angled with gentle Izaak Walton, roamed through the mediæval world of "Piers Plowman," and heard the country news of Gilbert White; and with literary charm and true discernment he has written of these things in many papers contributed to the Club's proceedings. To be a jester with cap and bells at the Christmas Supper and



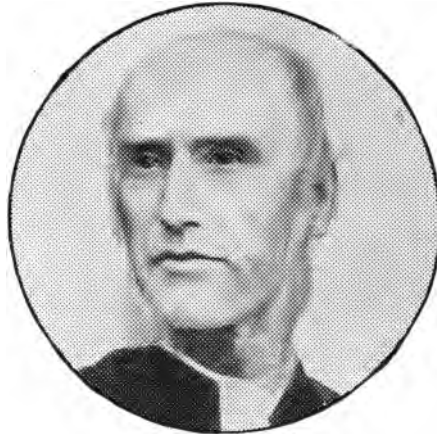
MR. C. E. TYRER.

at other times to read acceptable papers on such learned subjects as "Milton's Latin Poems" and "Dante's Use of Dialect" has been the happy fortune of Mr. William Whitehead.

Dante was the favourite study of "Our Scholar Gypsy," as Mr. Cuthbert E. Tyrer has been named. With a scholar's inclinations and artistic tastes, Mr. Tyrer was for some time engaged in a Manchester bank, but the wander-spirit was with him; so Spain, Norway, France, and Italy in particular, became

his fields of pilgrimage, with occasional visits to Manchester. Then at the Club he would read, as one reads whose subject enthral him, a paper, or perhaps a sonnet, for he had the secret of the sonnet, as his little volume entitled "Fifty Sonnets" shows. "Dante and the Scaligers" and "In the Footsteps of Dante" are among the papers read by Mr. Tyrer; others being concerned with Matthew Arnold, Landor, Browning, Tennyson, Keats, Coleridge, and Emerson, nor should some pleasing impressions of scenes and places visited by him in lands haunted by poesy and old romance be overlooked.

In the third volume of the "Papers" there is an exposition of Browning's "Childe Roland" which by its insight and deep



REV. W. A. O'CONNOR, B.A.

interest marks its writer as being of uncommon ability. His portrait, in black and white, is in the clubroom and displays a face which at once arrests the attention and arouses curiosity as to the original. The Rev. William Anderson O'Connor, B.A., was formerly rector of St. Simon and St. Jude's, Granby Row, and was a member of the Club from 1875 to his death in 1887. He was the author of a number of theological works and of a "History of the Irish People," and he made some

notable contributions to the Club's proceedings, including papers on "The 'Prometheus' of Æschylus and of Shelley," "The Prometheus Vincit," "Hamlet," "The Book of Job," and "Tennyson's 'Palace of Art,'" a 1 recognisable as the work of an independent mind keenly sensitive to the finest appeal of literature. Among other papers there is one on "Wit and Humour," qualities which he himself possessed and which made him as notable a figure at conversaciones and other such occasions as he was when discussing some serious subject in the Club. Fearless and outspoken, he seemed to place himself outside the current of professional advancement, but in the Club there was undivided admiration and sympathy for their "chaplain," who from 1882 to 1886 preached an annual sermon in his church to members and friends. Some of the sermons are printed in the "Papers." After Mr. O'Connor's death the Club undertook the publication of a volume of papers selected from his contributions; it was edited by Mr. Axon, and appeared under the title of "Essays on Literature and Ethics."

Mr. Alexander Ireland formed a connecting link between the Club and some great names in nineteenth century literature. He had spoken with Sir Walter Scott, interviewed Wordsworth at Rydal, spent a morning with De Quincey at Lasswade, been friendly with Carlyle, corresponded with Leigh Hunt, and had personal knowledge of Emerson, Lowell, Hawthorne, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. He was the last of four persons who knew the secret of Robert Chambers's authorship of "The Vestiges of Creation," and was enabled to reveal it to the Club in a paper read in 1891. Some of the authors known to him are the subjects of papers contributed by that "solid, dark, broad, rather heavy man, full of energy, broad sagacity, and practicability" as Mr. Ireland was described by Carlyle. His name is eminent in Manchester newspaper annals, and those who delight in books remember him gratefully for his "Book Lover's Enchiridion," his volumes of Hazlitt and Leigh Hunt selections, and his Emerson reminiscences.

Studies of our English writers are frequent themes amid the ever-welcome contributions of the President (Mr. Milner). Dryden as a lyrist, Goldsmith as a poet, the style of Gilbert White, Browning's versification, Shakspeare's method of work, Tennyson's "In Memoriam" in the light of the poet's notes; such are some of the subjects he has handled with fine literary

expression and in the spirit of the true critic, whose knowledge is based on experience. And beyond these there are the (unfortunately) unrecorded comments made during so many sessions upon the papers read at the meetings; comments frequently of a singularly illuminative character. Mr. John Mortimer has brought to the Club some charming appreciations of such writers as Charles Lamb, Thomas Hood, Thackeray, Mrs. Gaskell, George Eliot, William Hazlitt, and Washington Irving. It is with books as with men and women; they respond and give of their best to real sympathy, and in his papers Mr. Mortimer wins to the heart of his authors, for he has sympathy, and while not blind to their faults has eyes and heart for their virtues.



REV. A. W. FOX, M.A.



MR. T. NEWBIGGING.

Among numerous contributions ranging from the Greek drama to "Lifting Tuesday," the Rev. Arthur W. Fox, M.A., has dealt particularly with English writers of the seventeenth century, and the Club has had in consequence some most interesting papers on Francis Quarles, Henry Peacham, John Cliveland, Sir Henry Wotton, Thomas Carew, and Sir John Suckling. Other papers have been concerned with Shakspere's *Clowns*, Waller's *Plot*, Theocritus, the *Heroic Couplet*, &c., and some humorous village sketches such as "The Old Fortune Teller" are also noteworthy. Mr. Fox writes and reads his papers with the energy of enthusiasm; he is a book collector

who reads his bargains, is learned in nature-lore and is a writer of occasional verse, often in joking wise on the Club and its ways. His "Book of Bachelors" is not a treatise on how to be happy though unwed, but a collection of scholarly papers on sixteenth and seventeenth century bachelors of literary note. The Club is also indebted to another ministerial member, the Rev. William C. Hall, M.A. for some valuable and delightful papers on seventeenth century writers, chiefly the religious poets. He has so far written on John Donne, Robert Herrick, Drummond of Hawthornden, George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Richard Crashaw, and Thomas Traherne.

In 1874 a Shakspeare Section, in connection with the New Shakspeare Society, was formed, but only two meetings are recorded. This, however, by no means implies neglect of the great dramatist on the Club's part. Such a charge is amply refuted by the masterly Shakspearean contributions of Mr. J. T. Foard, who brought his legal training in dealing with evidence and a deep knowledge of Elizabethan literature to his investigations. Thus he contributed papers on "The Genesis of Hamlet," "Macbeth," "Shakspeare's Classical Plays," "Silly Stories about Shakspeare," "Shakspeare's Probable Connection with Lancashire," with other studies of that great literary epoch. Mr. Foard read these, and papers on Alfred the Great, Sir Walter Raleigh, London Club Life, and other subjects, with the emphasis of a barrister presenting a strong case. But it was the case for the prosecution when he came to deal with the "Bacon-Shakspeare Craze"! Mr. J. Cuming Walters has also contributed notably to the Club's Shakspearean studies. He has endeavoured to illumine Shakspeare's "Dark Period," has shown the Sonnets as the poet's literary notes for future use in the dramas, and in studying the "Merchant of Venice" and Shylock's character, has concluded that the play is intended to be a mirror wherein Christians may see an unflattering and salutary reflection. Mr. Axon has contributed a paper on "Did Shakspeare visit Lancashire?" and among numerous other contributions on the great dramatist by various members there is a novel and ingenious paper by Mr. E. Mercer entitled "A Menu from Shakspeare."

Robert Burns has not failed to find setters-forth of his praise in the Club. A striking feature of a "Burns Night," held in 1892, was Mr. Henry Nutter's extemporaneous address, during

which he recited from memory entire poems and made numerous quotations. On other occasions Burns was Mr. Nutter's theme, and his knowledge of the poet's life and work has been described as "wide, deep, and illimitable." Mr. Nutter has left a happy memory wherever he was known, especially in Burnley. A cheerful disposition, joined to goodness of heart; an eye for the humorous side of things and an ability to appreciate all that keeps life sweet and fresh—these were his and he shared them with all who came within his influence. Mr. Thomas Newbigging has also contributed to the Club's appreciations of Scotia's bard, and he has made other notable additions to the "Papers" in what he has written on "The Scottish Jacobites," "Lancashire Humour," "Mazzini," "Fables and Fabulists," "The Age of the Troubadours," and other subjects, including a recent study of George Eliot based on a re-reading of her writings. Several of these papers have since appeared in book form; "Lancashire Humour" being especially welcomed. Mr. Newbigging's career is proof that a man may sometimes do many things and do them well. If he has the brains, of course. An authority on gas-engineering, historian of Rossendale, politician, poet, essayist, and critic, he is only old in years, and the genial spirit of humour is sure to be lurking within the leaves of his manuscript when he reads a paper. The Club song, "We'll all go a-Clubbing to-night" is his composition, and it is a song of peace, though that first line of the chorus has perhaps a suggestion of assault and battery. Scottish literature has had another exponent in Sir W. J. Sinclair, who has read papers on James Hogg (the Ettrick Shepherd), George Buchanan, Alexander Ross, and George Beattie. Mr. W. Lawson (the "Melancholy Jacques"—though he was not melancholy—of the Titan Club), also contributed papers on Scottish Ballads, Jacobite Songs, and the poetry of Lady Nairn, Allan Ramsay, and Tannahill.

Of the literature of that gallant little country, whose language was spoken in the garden of Eden, (whether before or immediately after the Fall is not specified), Mr. John Davies has been the principal exponent in the Club, he having contributed papers on "The Mabinogion," "Some Early Welsh Romances," and "John Ceirog Hughes." Dr. A. Emrys-Jones in 1889 read a paper on "Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg), the Bard of Glamorgan."

It is interesting to know that the valuable introduction to the edition of the poems of John Keats, edited by that estimable scholar and journalist, Mr. W. T. Arnold, was first read before the Club as a paper entitled "The Vocabulary of Keats." Mr. Arnold was a member from 1883 to 1898. There is always the keen anticipation of something uncommonly good, with a choice seasoning of humour, when the Rev. Alexander Gordon, M.A. rises (all too rarely) to speak. His speech on Sir Thomas Browne, for example, at the time of the tercentenary of the author of the "Religio Medici" was a fine tribute, beautifully expressed, and spoken in a manner the remembrance of which is as of something perfect.

In 1895 a series of papers on Lancashire Novelists was commenced, and so far the following contributions have been made: Miss Lahee and Rev. J. Marshall Mather, by Mr. W. Dinsmore; Rev. C. W. Bardsley and Rev. Robert Lamb, by Mr. B. A. Redfern; William Harrison Ainsworth, Geraldine E. Jewsbury, Miss Jessie Fothergill, and Ben Brierley, by Mr. Edmund Mercer; Mrs. Gaskell, by Mr. John Mortimer; Mrs. Linnæus Banks, by Mr. W. R. Credland; and Miss Caroline Fothergill, by Mr. Geo. Shone. Canon Bardsley, referred to above, was a member of the Club for two years from 1877. He read a paper in 1878 on "Baptismal Nomenclature in Lancashire and Yorkshire." His "Dictionary of English and Welsh Surnames" is the standard book on the subject, and among his other writings the "Memorials of St. Ann's, Manchester," has a special local interest.

Recent and present-day authors cannot be said to be neglected in the Club. In addition to papers already referred to we may note that Mr. J. H. Brocklehurst has contributed papers on the novels, the poems, and the notable women in the novels, of George Meredith, and Mr. A. N. Monkhouse has also written on that great novelist's work. George Gissing has been considered by Mr. A. N. Monkhouse and Mr. J. J. Richardson; Joseph Conrad, by Mr. G. S. Lancashire; Rudyard Kipling, by Mr. E. Mercer; Henry Seton Merriman, by Mr. W. V. Burgess; Charles Marriott, by Mr. H. E. Campbell; the letters of R. L. Stevenson, by Mr. Frederick Smith, and Mr. Fred Johnson has pointed out some of the virtues and faults of Miss

Marie Corelli's productions. As regards poets, Mr. Brocklehurst has written on Swinburne; Mr. Milner, on Robert Bridges; Mr. Credland, on John Davidson; Mr. Tinsley Pratt, on Stephen Phillips and Alfred Noyes; Mr. B. A. Redfern, on the Rev. Thomas E. Brown, the Manx poet, Mr. Bagshaw, on Ernest Dowson; and Mr. Ernest Marriott raided a whole nest of modern poets in a paper on "The Thrush," a poetical periodical. Mr. S. Bradbury has dealt with William Canton; Mr. G. H. Bell, with Richard Jefferies; Mr. T. Cann Hughes, with Lawrence Binyon; Mr. Bagshaw, with R. B. Cunninghame Graham; and Mr. J. J. Richardson, with Augustine Birrell, as the originator of "Birrelling."



MR. W. V. BURGESS.



MR. J. F. L. CROSLAND.

A delight in the lore of the countryside, in the inspiration of green fields, the mountains, the moors, and the sea, is strongly in evidence in the contributions of many members, notably those of the President and the acting Vice-President. Mr. W. V. Burgess, besides dealing with poetry as anticipating science and as the concomitant of philosophy, has made a certain Cheshire village and its pastoral surroundings familiar to the Club, and has sketched with sympathetic touch the quaint homely folks with their laughable ways. And from far-off Athens and from where the Danube flows he has brought impressions caught and fixed with an able pen. In his "Hand in Hand with Dame



Nature " and other volumes Mr. Burgess appeals to those for whom a country ramble is fruitful of thought and quiet pleasure, and a volume of sonnets attests his skill in that direction. Among the Club portraits there is one representing a jovial Father Christmas which at the Christmas Supper always hangs immediately behind the President. The original was Mr. John Page, or "Felix Folio" as he was known when he took pen in hand. He was Markets Superintendent in official life, and at the Club a familiar and well-liked figure, with his merry stories, abounding reminiscences, knowledge of country lore ("Our Bird Master" was another Club name he had), and geniality of manner. His chief contribution was a paper on "Manchester Fairs," full of curious information. He presented to the Club in 1876 a handsome presidential hammer "to command deference



MR. THOMAS KAY.

from all who care a rap for our proceedings." Mr. Page loved old customs, and at Edwin Waugh's funeral handed round sprigs of rosemary which were finally to be thrown into the grave. Another member who has donned the robes of Father Christmas is Mr. J. F. L. Crosland,

Shakspeare's interpreter, good J.F.L.,  
Master of plays, and engine-craft as well,

who edits "Vulcan" and as a relief from technicalities occasionally recites effectively at the Club. Mr. Thomas Kay

finds material for papers in foreign countries, and has told of the water-lapped churches and palaces of Venice, the sun-glare of Algeria, the thunder and spray of Niagara, the songs and echoes of far-off days in Sicily, the dreams of classic art and of a stately past in Greece, and the loneliness of desolation where once was empire at Carthage. And this not only in words but with pictured art, and with verse set to music by another hand.

Alderman Mandley was another member who brought treasures from afar; from Mexico, North America, and India. Mr. C. H. Bellamy has described the Libraries of Munich and Vienna, told of the Oberammergau Passion Play of 1900, and passing to another continent, has portrayed the Marshall Pass of the Rocky Mountains. The Club had a notable geographer in Mr. Eli Sowerbutts, the founder and indefatigable secretary of the Manchester Geographical Society, who was a member from 1874 until his death in 1904.

Mr. Alfred O. Legge contributed in 1884 a paper on Richard III., and his researches ultimately resulted in the publication of a work in two volumes in which a more favourable estimate than the popular one of the character of that monarch is reached. Mr. Legge published other works, including a Life of Pius IX., and among his further contributions to the Club there is a paper on "Style," and one on Erasmus's pilgrimage to Walsingham.

While there is a sunrise and a sunset, the smile of a little child, and a wind on the heath, the world will have its poets. So it is to be expected that in a literary club, those who have not only the feeling, but, in varying degrees, the power of poetical expression will be found. From the beginning the Club has had its poets, and it will be time to write "To Let" upon the club-room door when the last poet has gone. But there is no present sign of such a calamity.

There was Edwin Waugh, whose poems and songs are a bracing tonic to a weary spirit, who sang of homely joys and sorrows, the beauty of true love, the joy of the open air, and the humour of lowly life. Ben Brierley, too, could touch the chord of true feeling; and there were also Bamford, Laycock, and Bealey. Charles Swain's songs and shorter poems were formerly widely popular, and Southey prophesied that Manchester would one day be proud of him. The changed

sentiment of these days probably accounts for much of the neglect that is at present his fate. Nevertheless, though his long poems are perhaps likely to remain unread, there is no reason why his true lyrical faculty should be forgotten. He was a member of the Club from 1863 to his death in 1874, and whether in the club-room, the street, or his engraving office in Cannon Street, he could not be taken for other than a poet and one of nature's gentlemen. An Italian visitor to the Club some years ago placed on record his impressions of the visit. He was particularly struck with the personality of Mr. Abraham Stansfield and his vigorous defence of Milton against an allusion somewhat wanting in reverence. To speak lightly of a great poet in Mr. Stansfield's presence is equivalent to going out during a thunderstorm and carrying a lightning-rod for protection. Mr. Stansfield has a cosmopolitan and scholarly taste in literature, translation from the German being a notable feature of his work. He has published volumes of poetry and literary essays; has edited journals and contributed largely to periodicals. In the Club he has been a prominent and valued contributor to the proceedings. The subjects of his longer papers have included the Folk-Speech of the Lancashire Border (in which he has dealt particularly with the dialect writings of James Standing, at one time a member of the Club); Moss-gatherers: a Lancashire specimen (John Nowell); Rambles in the West Riding; Henry Kirke White; What Burns owes to Fergusson; Thomas De Quincey, etc. His poetical contributions have also been numerous and notable, his sonnets in particular, for his inspiration has a special faculty for materialising in the form and substance of a sonnet. Mr. Stansfield is well-known also as an authority on botany, and he is a lecturer who grips his audience. He has been a member since 1880 and his portrait, painted and presented by the artist, Mr. George Perkins, a former member, hangs in the clubroom.

Mr. Tinsley Pratt has sent forth various argosies of poesy, ("Wordsworth at Rydal, and other Poems," "Harold the Saxon," and "Persephone in Hades") and they have been hailed in commendatory tones by the critics; he is now further known as having spun a brisk yarn, in prose, of the brave days "When Hawkins sailed the Sea." To the Club's proceedings he has contributed critical papers on Lord de Tabley, Omar

Khayyam Literature, Edward FitzGerald, Matthew Arnold, Stephen Phillips, James Thomson, and other subjects. He has also read poems and when occasion serves, his muse takes a festive turn and can give a right sailor stave or sing the song of the Marmalade Bun.

"Rowland Thirlmere," otherwise Mr. John Walker, is the author of some notable travel books concerning Spain, and also a volume of poems, "A Woman of Emotions and other Poems." His Club contributions have been chiefly poetical, and his path in poetry leads sometimes into regions of stern heights and solemn depths, but there are many places where the sun warms the blood, where bright eyes sparkle, and the lyrical spirit is abroad.

To name all the members who have "struck the lyre" would be a lengthy task, but it should be said that Messrs. Alfred Edmeston, J. A. Goodacre, J. B. Oldham, Laurence Clay, and S. Bradbury have made more or less numerous and effective contributions to the body of the Club's poetry. Concerning the President's poetry, Mr. Mortimer's words shall tell: "There is about our poet's verse a sweet pensive reflectiveness born within him upon such occasions as when he composes a hymn for a church festival, or renders musical some pious thought of Thomas a Kempis; as he stoops over a daffodil or listens to the song of the thrush in the twilight of a March evening, or stands meditatively in the shadow of 'The Grey Tower of Dalmeny.'"

If not to the gaiety of nations, at least to the hearty amusement of the Club, certain members have specially contributed. When Mr. J. E. Craven reads a paper, whether it be concerned with "The Hydrington Prosecution Society," "An Old Border Club," "Dogs in Council," or "Lodgings," or verses on the Club itself, even the portraits on the wall can hardly keep their faces straight. Certainly the living members cannot. Yet, like all true humorists, Mr. Craven has his serious side, and his verses on "Cloughton Church Bells" retain something of the haunting yet pleasing melancholy so characteristic of bell music. Mr. Edgar Atkins can discourse on "The Ethics of Clock-winding" and "The advantages of sleeping on the coals," yet preserve a legal countenance amid the unrestrained laughter of his fellow-members. He has also been concerned with more serious topics, such as "Herbert Spencer's Autobiography," "A Note on Thackeray," and "An Incident in Criticism (Dr. Maginn and

Miss L. E. Landon)," though humour is never far off. Yet, usually, when the laughter has subsided one realises that the serious countenance is more than a foil to the fun ; somewhat of its counterpart remains.

Mr. B. A. Redfern defies classification. In his normal appearance he suggests one who might have discussed poetry with Shakspeare and his fellows at the Mermaid ; at Christmas he gives the blessing of Father Christmas at the Supper ; when he reads some highly amusing sketches of doings in " Mossbrook " he is Lancashire to the " clog soles," whilst on another occasion he would be claimed as a compatriot by an Irishman. Likewise



**MR. B. A. REDFERN.**

he reads serious papers (on Lewis Carroll, T. E. Brown, Constance Naden, C. W. Bardsley, Thomas Gray and the Lake Country, etc.), makes verses that have charm, and being a Club free-lance he genially rhymes on members and their doings. Mr. H. E. Campbell also dwells on the border. He has written of Sir Arthur Helps and has translated snatches of Horace, yet when he rises to speak there is always a delightful uncertainty whether it is to relate an anecdote or to join in the discussion. But there

is no uncertainty in his poem "On a Moorland Road" ("Papers" 1900); it reveals the consecrated hope that is born of great sorrow. The creator of the delightfully amusing "Elijer Goff" and the architect of the Victoria Buildings, Mr. William Dawes, was a member of the Club; so also has been Mr. Robert Pollitt, humorist, maker of rhymes, and art critic, whose song in praise of "Bohemia" is sometimes heard when the occasion is festive. Mr. J. D. Andrew ("Cornelius Horatius Flaccus, M.A.") in prose and verse wields a satiric flail with salutary effect. The Superior Person, and the New Woman as writer and subject of fiction, have, among others, undergone castigation, and recently Mr. George Bernard Shaw. Under the



MR. J. E. CRAVEN.



MR. J. D. ANDREW.

title of "The Persecuted Germ," Mr. Andrew once contributed a ballad descriptive of the sufferings of the influenza bacillus at the hands of inconsiderate medical and scientific men! The writer of the well-known "Father O'Flynn," Mr. Alfred Perceval Graves, was a member from 1879 to 1883. There is a song of his, "Molly Bawn," in the "Papers" for 1882.

The Club has not overlooked the claims of the drama both as literature and art, though it should be noted, that with the exception of Shakspeare, papers on our dramatic literature have been singularly few. The "Dramatic Dissensions of Jonson,

Marston and Dekker," and "Marlowe's Influence on Shakspere" have been dealt with by Mr. J. T. Foard. Mr. J. J. Richardson has contributed a paper on "Congreve and his Comedies," and Mr. J. H. Hobbins has written on "Some Women of the Early Dramatists." In 1880 Mr. E. Romaine Callender read a paper on "Lancashire Dramatic Authors." The subject of "Public Taste and Theatrical Amusements" was discussed by Mr. John Evans, in 1878, and in the same year a paper on "The Revival of the Drama" was read by Mr. R. J. Udall. Mr. A. N. Monkhouse, in a short paper on "The Christmas Pantomime," in 1893 pleaded not for its extinction but for its purification and limitation. In 1891 Mr. Monkhouse brought the subject of "Ibsen's Social Plays" before the Club in a noteworthy paper. A "Symposium on the Modern Drama" was held on March 9th, 1903, when Councillor W. Butterworth read a paper on "The Drama and its Prospects," Mr. Tinsley Pratt considered the drama as a representation of modern society, Mr. Milner discussed "The Tendencies and Prospects of the Modern Drama," and Mr. J. H. Hobbins contributed some impressions gathered in the threepenny gallery of the cheap theatre. A discussion followed which, along with the papers, disclosed a hopeful outlook, whilst admitting the existence of ample room for improvement.

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#### IV.

Bibliography seeks to bring order into the vast and ever-increasing multitude of books, by description, cataloguing, and classification. Its usefulness was early recognised by the Club, especially under Mr. Nodal and Mr. Axon, though a Bibliographical Section begun in 1878 was but short-lived. There still exists the crying need of an adequate annual register of English publications, and a striking proof of this was shown when in 1877 the Club published Mr. Axon's list of Lancashire and Cheshire publications for 1876. Out of 267 items therein enumerated, there were but 31 entered in the "English Catalogue" (the principal annual list) for that year! Under Mr. Axon's inspiration the Club memorialised the British Museum Trustees in 1875 to undertake an annual list, but the project was not entertained. In 1877 Mr. Axon read a paper before the Club making proposals for a catalogue of the printed books in the British Museum Library. This great and valuable work has since been accomplished, thanks to the energy of the late Dr. Garnett and his colleagues. From 1880 to 1887 Mr. C. W. Sutton carried on a most difficult piece of work for the Club in compiling for each year a Manchester Bibliography. An examination of those lists will astonish the reader with the remarkable amount of printed matter issued yearly in one city alone. Mr. Sutton's "List of Lancashire Authors; with brief Biographical and Bibliographical Notes," was an extra publication of the Club in 1876 which has proved of much service. A Gaskell Bibliography by Mr. Axon and Mr. Ernest Axon accompanied the "Papers" for 1895, and some curious information, bibliographical and otherwise, is contained in Mr. Abel Heywood's papers on almanacs of various periods, while Mr. Albert Nicholson's "Literature of the Lake District" is an interesting essay in topographical bibliography. Many other bibliographical contributions will be found in the "Papers."

Mr. James Crossley, F.S.A., was pre-eminent among the book-collectors of the Club. He was the founder and second president of the Chetham Society, and gathered together a library of



great extent, notable features of which were its rare pamphlets, Commonwealth tracts, and the writings of Defoe. Mr. Crossley had great bibliographical knowledge, a scholar's and book-lover's tastes, was a charming after-dinner speaker, and an exceptional judge of port. Dr. R. C. Christie, formerly Chancellor of the Diocese, was another notable collector, whose choice library, with its editions of Horace, its Aldines, and productions of the Lyonese printers as prominent features, now forms part of his noble gift (the Christie Library) to our University. He was "a thorough scholar as well as an enthusiastic bibliophile," as his masterly work on the great French printer, Etienne Dolet, proves. To the Club he contributed an exhaustive paper on the Marquis de Morante's Spanish library. Another remarkable collector of books was Mr. John Jackson, a member from 1881 to 1889, whose library at his home numbered about 20,000 volumes, while at his office numerous parcels of books awaited removal. Referring to him as "John Jarmyn," Mr. Mortimer wrote a charming and intimate account of Mr. Jackson, which will be found in the "Papers" for 1894. The example of Mr. J. J. Gleave may be warmly commended to book-collectors both in the Club and elsewhere. Being a devoted admirer of the work of the gifted Brontë sisters, Mr. Gleave has in the course of many years brought together a most interesting and valuable Brontë collection. He has made it available to all readers and secured it against dispersion, by generously presenting the collection to the Moss Side Public Library. Much interesting information concerning the libraries of various members will be found included in Mr. Nodal's "Special Collections of Books in Lancashire and Cheshire" ("Papers," vol. 6), and in Mr. C. W. Sutton's kindred paper read in 1899 before the Library Association.

The Club has never forgotten that art is an essential feature of its interests. Papers on art topics are fairly frequent, often illustrated with examples, and exhibitions of the pictures and other art work of members are notable features of the conversazioni. In earlier years papers were read in connection with the conversazione exhibitions, but the later custom is for the President to make suitable reference in his usual address delivered on those occasions. At a conversazione in 1874 Mr. Charles Rowley read a paper with reference to an exhibition of

works by Lancashire artists. Mr. Frederick J. Shields was then about to remove to London, and a suggestion of Mr. Rowley's taken up by the Club led to a "fine and remarkable exhibition of Mr. Shields's drawings and pictures at the Royal Institution." Mr. Shields became a member in 1875, and the Club is naturally proud of one whose work, especially in religious art, is of such eminence. Though unable, by reason of distance, to attend the meetings, Mr. Shields retains a real interest in the Club and its doings. In the year of his election he contributed a paper on the works of Ford Madox Brown, and in 1880 sent a series of cartoons for stained-glass windows in Eaton Hall for exhibition at a conversazione. Various of his drawings have appeared in the "Papers."

Mr. Charles Potter was another member whose works have been "hung." It was in 1863 that he joined, and he was a member when he died in September, 1907. He has left the memory of a bright, hearty personality; one who could sing a song of Waugh's "with a mellow, warbling sweetness" as well as paint landscapes. It was he who localised Ben Brierley's "Daisy Nook" at Woodhouses. In 1890 he exhibited at the Club an angler's bait can, dated 1644, and said to have once belonged to Izaak Walton. Then there was Mr. William Percy, portrait painter, and famed in the Club as a "chanter of old ballads"—

"The gallant Percy, who with ringing note,  
Poured songs unending from his merry throat."

A remarkable exhibition of fifty-one portraits painted by him was seen at a conversazione in 1885. The Club's portrait of Mr. T. R. Wilkinson is by Mr. Percy, and the portrait of Waugh in the City Art Gallery is also from his brush. A water-colour portrait of Waugh belonging to the Club is a copy, by a pupil, of a portrait by Mr. Percy. He joined the Club in 1863, and his membership extended to his death in 1903.

Mr. Christopher Blacklock, painter of nature's quiet moods, Mr. Henry Watkinson, painter and engraver (notably of Caldecott's illustrations), and Mr. R. Bruce Wallace, are others whose works have been shown. Mr. W. Noel Johnson, among present members, has exhibited, and he has also made many interesting contributions to the literary work of the Club in

papers interpretative of certain phases of art, music, and literature. "Voices from Sea and Shore" is a striking description of the sounds heard in storm and calm on the sea beach and by the cliffs. At the closing conversazione of the 1906-7 session there was a notable exhibition of the work of Mr. Walter Emsley, who sees and paints the beauty and the magic of mist effects. He is likewise a capable writer of dialect and other humorous verse, which he can also read very effectively. These exhibitions have brought out the fact that, as with verse-writing, so with painting and drawing, many members have a distinct leaning in that direction—a taste based on real achievement, as the work of Messrs. G. Milner, T. Kay, E. E. Minton, E. Marriott, H. Gannon, W. R. Credland, J. J. Gleave, Joel Wainwright, and others has shown. Among professional members not so far mentioned was Mr. George Sheffield, the well-known black-and-white artist. He had a remarkable ability for rapid yet effective work. When at a conversazione in 1881 an address on "Principles of Art in Monochrome" was given by Mr. R. Smith, B.A., Mr. Sheffield, without pre-arrangement, executed in from three to four and a half minutes each several striking drawings to illustrate the speaker's remarks. Mr. J. H. E. Partington, the founder of the Stockport Literary Club, was a member from 1876 to 1889. In 1883 he painted and presented to the Club the portrait of Mr. John Page as Father Christmas. He made various literary contributions, and of one ("The Story of a Picture," in vol. 7) the "Spectator" said, "He has somehow managed to weave Nature into his sentences, and we see the sky and feel the breeze and hear the 'water lapping on the crag' as he saw and felt and heard these gracious visitations." Mr. Richard Hooke, who joined in 1883, and became a Vice-President in 1895, whose pen has delineated Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., and been concerned with Irish folk tales, witchcraft, and other topics, painted the portrait of Mr. Milner, which hangs in the clubroom, and presented it to the Club in 1886, a good example which has been followed by Mr. T. Binney Gibbs, whose portrait of the President, painted and presented in 1905, is another welcome addition to the Club's possessions.

Mr. W. G. Baxter, the clever creator of that bibulous oddity "Ally Sloper," was a former member; and the roll of names has

also included Messrs. Walter Tomlinson, Reginald Barber, Ward Heys, W. Robinson, R. G. Somerset, W. Artingstall, George Hayes, and George Richardson. Mr. Robert Langton, whose ability as a wood engraver placed him among the English masters of that art, contributed various papers, particularly one on "Charles Dickens and Rochester," with numerous woodcut illustrations. This was subsequently absorbed in a volume, the production of his loving care, "The Childhood and Youth of Charles Dickens." Mr. E. E. Minton has written with clearness of exposition and considerable interest on various art topics, and has also dealt with Richard Hakluyt and the Elizabethan seamen, Columbus, and the weird legend of the "Flying Dutchman," whilst his pencil has added contributions in illustration. A contribution important to all admirers of Randolph Caldecott's art was made by Mr. William Clough in 1886, and will be found in the "Papers" for that year, with some interesting reproductions of sketches. Mr. L. J. Oppenheimer has propounded "A Theory of Art" and discussed "Didactic Art." He also defies the law of gravitation by climbing mountains in the modern scientific fashion, and the Club has benefited by one or two charming papers inspired by the freedom and the breezy grandeur of the heights.

Art in Manchester and the housing of the city's art treasures have had the earnest consideration of the Club. A paper on "Manchester as an Art Centre," read by Mr. J. H. E. Partington at a *conversazione* in 1877, led to a discussion at two ordinary meetings, and in the same year on three evenings some proposals by Mr. T. C. Horsfall for an Art Museum were discussed. Mr. J. E. Phythian read a paper in 1898 on "The Art Institutions of Manchester," in which co-ordination of their work was advocated. Representatives of the institutions concerned were present, and joined in the discussion aroused by the paper. Mr. Phythian, who is the author of "The Story of Art in the British Islands," "Trees in Nature, Myth and Art," "Fifty Years of Modern Painting," a book on the Pre-Raphaelites, and one on Geo. F. Watts, R.A., has been a member from 1886, and the "Papers" contain contributions from his pen. He has dealt with the Art of Clarence Whaite, Ford Madox Brown, the Chapel of the Ascension (Bayswater), and other art topics; travel sketches having Italy and County Galway as their scenes, and papers

on literature, including one on George Sand. Another evening when visitors were specially invited was in 1905, when Councillor Walter Butterworth read a paper on "Art and Citizenship." Certain suggestions then made had influence in the subsequent formation of the Manchester and Salford Society of Friends of Art. Sometimes when the subject admits, or specially requires it, the reader of a paper brings books, engravings and other objects in illustration. Thus Mr. Richard Bagot read a paper on Hablot K. Browne ("Phiz"), and showed a long series of his book illustrations; and Mr. Harry Thornber, in dealing at various times with John Leech, James Gillray, George Cruikshank, and with "Book Illustration," made some highly interesting displays of illustrative material. Mr. E. Ireland has also dealt with "Book Illustration, Ancient and Modern," and lantern slides illustrated his paper. Mr. C. T. Tallent-Bateman has a remarkable knowledge of the subject of book illustration, particularly of the period when woodcuts and steel engravings were in vogue. His papers on "Drawing-room Annuals," "The 'Forget-Me-Not' Annual," "William Harvey," "Richard Westall and Birket Foster," &c., have been lavishly illustrated from his unique collections of beautiful books. Recent contributions by Mr. H. Cadness on "The Art of the Illuminator and Scribe" and "Walter Crane" have been admirably supplemented in this way. Appended to the "Papers" for 1884 is Mr. J. H. Nodal's "Art in Lancashire and Cheshire. A list of deceased artists, with brief biographical notes." About 300 artists are noticed.

Musicians, professional and amateur, have ever been popular and useful members of the Club both as regards the reading of papers with musical illustration and in less formal exercise of their art. Mr. John Mortimer has thus testified: "There are what may be called lyrical pauses which serve to lighten labours critical or creative, and though no record is taken of these contributions, it not unfrequently happens that what is sung is more effective than what is said."

A noteworthy feature of the musical side of the Club's work is the amount of original composition submitted. In 1884 an operetta, "The Great Pickwick Case," composed by Mr. Thomas Rawson, the songs being written by Mr. Robert Pollitt, was performed; illustrative readings from the "Pickwick

Papers " being given by Mr. George Evans. Again, in 1887 portions of an opera entitled " Eulalie," founded on Washington Irving's " Spectre Bridegroom," were sung. The composer was Mr. Christopher E. Rowley, and the libretto was the work of Mr. Joseph M'Kim, a member of the Club. Mr. Laurence Clay read in 1906 the libretto of a cantata founded on La Motte Fouque's " Undine," but the music was not heard in the Club. In 1900 a Masonic cantata with music by Dr. Henry Watson and words by Mr. C. T. Tallent-Bateman, was sung by the choir of the Manchester Gentlemen's Glee Club. On another occasion Dr. Watson gave " Some Musical and Other Impressions of Sicily," playing and singing various native airs, and also some of his own settings of songs written by Mr. T. Kay. Dr. Watson and Mr. Kay were also associated in two papers entitled " Literary and Musical Gleanings from a Highland Glen." At the closing conversazione of the 1906-7 session Dr. Watson, with other singers, and instrumentalists playing old-time instruments, gave a delightful concert of old English music which will live long in the memory of those who heard it. As a speaker, and in his explanatory words on such occasions, the genial Doctor is thoroughly happy, and puts his audience into the best possible frame of mind for the true enjoyment of the music. Mr. N. P. Thamsen's original settings of (among others) some of Mr. Milner's songs should be noted, and in connection with Mr. Kay's papers some melodious settings of his songs by a non-member, Mr. Darman Ward, have delighted the Club. Mr. John Bannister read a paper on John Fawcett, the Lancashire composer, and another of considerable interest on Henry Lawes, the musician friend of Milton, and both papers were musically illustrated. Mr. W. I. Wild read papers on Mendelssohn, Balfe, Sir H. R. Bishop, and on songs and glees, and on each occasion " music's golden tongue " aided the reader. So also some delightful evenings have resulted from Mr. Robert Peel's musical papers on Mozart, Haydn, Purcell, and two devoted to Opera. Mr. Thomas Derby, who leads the music at the Christmas Supper, and who is ever ready with welcome aid when the Club desires the voice of melody, has chosen delightful subjects and has given them adequate treatment, aided musically by other members, in " Old English Ballads," " Ballads of the Fleet," " Music Illustrating Shakspeare," and the " Songs of Burns." Likewise that veteran singer, Mr. Nathaniel Dumville, whose

voice was heard for upwards of forty years in the Cathedral choir, and whose bâton has for that period led the scholars' singing in Albert Square on Whit Monday, is an active member, and he has read papers on J. L. Hatton, Bishop's Operas, Charles Dibdin, Reginald Spofforth, and Tudor and Stuart music. His friends of the Cathedral choir have loyally assisted him in the musical illustrations, to the great pleasure of the Club. Mr. Frank R. Hollins in 1882 gave "A Night with Arthur Sullivan," and for more than an hour and a half sang selections and described their settings in the operas, &c. On another occasion he gave an hour's selections from "Princess Ida," and in many of the Club's "lyrical pauses" his voice was heard with delight. In 1887 Mr. W. F. Cottrell read a paper on "Shakspeare's Songs and Singers," and the choir of St. James's, Hope, near Eccles, on this and other occasions supplied the music, under the leadership of Mr. John Bannister.

The Club has on various occasions initiated, or participated in, action on behalf of educational and other objects beneficial to the community. Its interest in the proper housing of Manchester's art treasures and in the city's attitude towards art has already been alluded to. In 1876 it memorialised the City Council in protest against a proposal to locate the Reference Library in the top rooms of the new Town Hall, and in the following year promoted a requisition for the calling of a citizens' meeting to consider the utilisation of the old Town Hall for library purposes, the meeting being almost unanimously in favour of the proposal. In 1884 a resolution hoping that the Free Libraries Committee might retain that building was sent from the Club to the Council, and when the Free Libraries jubilee was celebrated in 1903 the Club added its congratulatory address to many received by the Libraries Committee. In 1887 the Club had a conference on the future of free libraries, when Mr. Nodal read an introductory paper, and an interesting discussion, joined in by various members of the Libraries Committee, ensued.

Sir James A. Picton, whose generosity is perpetuated in the fine Picton Reading Room of the Liverpool Public Libraries, was a member of the Club from 1873 to 1888. It is satisfactory to note that the present Chairman of the Manchester Public Free Libraries' Committee, Alderman Plummer, and the Deputy-Chairman, Councillor T. C. Abbott, are both members.

During the winters of 1881-2 and 1882-3 lectures were given by various members in Peel Park Museum and Art Gallery, and lectures and entertainments at the Blind Asylum, and it may be said that not a few of the papers read before the Club are heard subsequently at other literary gatherings.

A memorial from the Club in favour of the establishment of Owens College as a university was presented in 1877 to the President of the Council of Education, and ten years later it supported the application of the Victoria University for a Government grant. In the same year (1887) a memorial was presented by the Club to the Manchester Waterworks Committee petitioning for the preservation of a Wordsworth and Coleridge relic, the "Rock of Names," at Thirlmere, and a resolution was passed protesting against a proposed railway from Windermere Station to Ambleside. A similar protest was made in 1898 against a proposed light railway through the Pass of Aberglaslyn from Portmadoc to Beddgelert.

In 1896 some interesting suggestions as to the possibility of the Club and kindred institutions aiding the municipal authorities in educational and cognate work were made by Councillor T. C. Abbott in a paper on "Literary Societies and Civic Life." Mr. Abbott expressed the opinion that deputations from such societies on questions of importance might have considerable influence. The Club, later in the year, acted upon the suggestion, and joined with the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society in sending a deputation to the Parks Committee concerning the restoration and preservation of Clayton Hall. The question of international copyright moved the Club in 1886 to memorialise the Government in favour of proposals laid before the Berne Conference, and in 1895 it supported the Society of Authors in opposition to a Canadian Copyright Bill having clauses prejudicial to English authors. Through a Parliamentary member, Mr. David Chadwick, M.P., the Club in 1877 petitioned the House of Commons in favour of the amendment of the law of libel as affecting newspapers and their proprietors. In November, 1891, the case of a local author, Mr. James Swindells, who had been induced to send manuscripts and money to certain persons in London representing themselves to be a firm of publishers, was taken up by the Club. Financial aid was subscribed, and



Mr. Edgar Atkins voluntarily undertook the conduct of the case. Mr. A. A. Bethune, Q.C., also gave his services, and Mr. Swindells was successful in his action, being awarded substantial damages. In 1882 a memorial promoted by the Club to Mr. Gladstone was successful in securing an annual pension of £90 for Edwin Waugh; in 1893 a grant of £200 from the Civil List Fund to Mr. Alexander Ireland was obtained, and the Club has participated in public subscriptions in recognition of the services of Ben Brierley and Mrs. G. Linnæus Banks.

On more than one occasion the question of a public memorial in Manchester to Thomas De Quincey has been before the Club. In October, 1907, Mr. W. E. A. Axon in the course of a paper concerned with De Quincey made the suggestion that a memorial window should be placed in St. Ann's Church, where the famous essayist was baptised.

The Club takes its relaxation from the more serious work in various ways. There are opening and closing conversaziones, when ladies add their bright presence. In organising these pleasant gatherings Mr. John Wilcock has for some years done signal service; in sterner moments he has read papers on Ruskinian economics, creative literature, the romance of commerce, the literary commercial, and other more or less abstruse subjects. It was at a conversazione in 1885 that a pleasant little ceremony took place in the shape of the presentation of the Royal Humane Society's bronze medal and certificate to a Club member, Mr. John Bradbury, for saving a boy from drowning, that being the thirteenth life saved by Mr. Bradbury. From 1880 to 1890 there was an annual joint conversazione of the Club and the Manchester Academy of Fine Arts, and at that held in 1883 William Morris gave an address on "Art, Wealth, and Riches," on which occasion Mr. T. R. Wilkinson, whose generous spirit, ("the untiring helper of good causes"), quick intellect, and interesting character live in the Club's memory, while claiming to be a dreamer himself, made a resolute defence of present conditions. The Christmas Suppers, with their picturesque old-time ceremonies, have been happily described by Mr. John Mortimer in the paper which he has

kindly allowed to be reprinted with this narrative. Another old-time custom which is observed in the Club is the partaking of Bury simnel on the Monday evening following Simnel Sunday. Mr. Alex. Taylor presented the mystic cake for some years; the Bury members now unite in providing it. During the summer an Excursion is arranged, occupying the whole day, and is greatly enjoyed. Even a wet day does not altogether spoil the fun. Many interesting places have thus been visited, among which may be mentioned Ashbourne, Alton Towers, Lancaster, Malham, Lichfield, Speke Hall, Moreton Hall, Sandbach, Shrewsbury, Ripon, and Clapham. Special visits have been paid to the former Campfield Library (in 1875), the Salford Free Library and Museum, the Chetham Library, the John Rylands Library, the University (Owens College) Library, the Free Library and Museum at Warrington, and in 1884 to Nottingham on the invitation of the Literary Club of that city.

When the British Association met in Manchester in 1887 the Club entertained the British and foreign journalists present, and in 1899 a smoking concert was given to which the members of the Library Association, then holding its annual meeting in Manchester, were invited. On sundry occasions, but not on the ordinary Club night, a "Special Evening" has been indulged in, when ladies have been invited to be present. Thus in 1899 Mr. S. H. Brooks gave a lecture on "The Scilly Isles," with lantern illustrations and music, and Mr. Harrison Hill contributed some of his delightful humour. In 1902 Mr. Frederic Smith gave an evening on "The Evolution of the Cremona Violin," and some valuable instruments were played upon in illustration by Mr. J. S. Bridge. On another evening in 1904 Mrs. Craigie ("John Oliver Hobbes"), being in Manchester in connection with the production of a play, gave a charming lecture on "The Science of Life."

It is a hopeful sign for the future that so many of those who have joined in recent years have come forward to share in the work of the Club. Many have read short papers of considerable promise, whilst the Rev. G. R. Goodall, Captain A. Doggett, and Messrs. J. Bowland, S. Bradbury, J. M. Coward,

G. F. Gadd, G. S. Lancashire, D. H. Langton, Frederic Smith, and J. R. Williamson have attained to the distinction of reading a "principal paper." The Club has a past of which it may be justly proud; it has a present which assuredly encourages a cheerful hope for the future. May the approach of winter, heralding new sessions of the Club, continue to be greeted in the spirit of Mr. B. A. Redfern's lines—

And shall we grieve that summer's o'er,  
That winter frowns? Nay, all in vain  
His warning chills and waning light!  
Glad with our spoils of fruit or grain,  
Or flowers with dew and sunshine bright—  
We've come together once again,  
And Harvest Home begins to-night.

# THE CHRISTMAS SUPPERS.

BY JOHN MORTIMER.

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When invited to indulge in some reminiscences of the Christmas suppers of the Manchester Literary Club I confess that I did not take kindly to the subject. A mood of mind was induced into which there came an echo of some words of Thackeray in similar conditions. "How stale," says he, "it has become, that printed jollity about Christmas! Carols, and wassail-bowls, and holly, and mistletoe—what heaps of these have we not had for years past?" A great deal of that jollity is to be found printed in the chronicles of the Club's transactions, and I must say that I am not altogether innocent of having contributed to it, neither can I say that when the wassail-bowl is brought in again—though I haven't tasted it for years—and the wassail song is sung—by-the-way, one of the best singers of it was a teetotaler—and that electrifying cry of "Wassail!" goes up into the air, I shall not find myself shouting with the loudest.

Deep-rooted in the constitution of the Club is this disposition to Christmas festivity, traceable, as I think, to its essentially social character, and to the half-dozen congenial and convivial souls who met together in the corner of a tavern room some forty-five years ago, and laid its foundations. My memory reaches back to a period ten years short of that, and to the time when its printed records began, but I am inclined to think, and tradition favours the opinion, that never a year of its existence has passed without some form of junketing at this season. And the marvel of it is that it never seems to grow stale, but ever as the time comes round, the club-room, or some larger chamber, decorated with holly and mistletoe, is crowded with revellers. The mummers are there, and the jester, and, after the strains of "The

First Nowell " have died away in the outer corridor, the boar's head is brought in borne in the front of a quaintly-attired procession, and to the singing of that fine old carol which touched the soul of Washington Irving, with its opening lines—

The boar's head in hand bring I  
Bedecked with bays and rosemary,  
And I pray you, my masters, be merry;

and its refrain, caught up in chorus,

Caput apri defero,  
Reddens laudes Domino.

In its season, too, comes the wassail-bowl, and with it the traditional, venerable, grey-bearded, holly-wreathed, and scarlet-robed figure of Father Christmas, to greet the president and the assembled company, and to be himself met with responsive and rapturous greetings.

Looking back down the vista of thirty-five years, with the long array of supper tables reaching from the latest, in dim perspective, to the earliest, it is no easy task, nay, well-nigh impossible, to give in orderly sequence the impressions that remain of them. What memories crowd upon the mental vision! What a long procession of those who have graced those festive boards passes before it!—many, very many, of those who were associated with the earlier time being now no more than memories, and to be seen only in visions. To that earlier time it seems natural to revert in this reminiscent review, and it is like passing from complex and luxurious conditions to the simple life. The supper table was laid in that old hostelry the Mitre, hard by the Cathedral, and the guests were gathered together round one long table, a fit company, though few. In these later days, we have a menu card with soups and fish and dishes various set down upon it, with a due sequence of dessert, and with dress-coated waiters to wait upon dress-coated guests; but in those days we had no such conventionalities, and only one dish, to wit, tripe, varied in its presentation of fried and boiled, with onions to make it savoury. 'Twas a modest refection truly, that succulent tripe, but by virtue of its association with a feast of a higher kind it is ennobled in the recollection to an extent to which truffles may not hope to attain. When this had been discussed, and the cloth withdrawn, long clay pipes, churchwardens, were

laid upon the mahogany, the tobacco to fill them being gathered from a common source of supply. There was no programme, and there were no set speeches, but instead jests and songs, and cheerful talk thrown in promiscuously. Father Christmas was there, of course, habited as in these days, but he was a solitary figure; his retinue came with the after years, and has grown in numbers and picturesqueness of display. The wassail-bowl, too, I think, came later, and certainly the wassail song does not echo back from that dim time.

Other songs, however, there are which linger in the memory, and one would give something to hear again the old familiar strain, "Has anyone here seen Hugo?" and "There came three students over Rhine." The "Mistletoe Bough" was inevitable, until in later years, though it was sung with flute-like sweetness by Thomas Derby, it was accounted too melancholy, and was discarded, as also, for the same reason, was the other Christmas song which called upon you to be merry because you might "Never have the chance again." Some of the ballads seem to have died with the singers, such as those chanted by Percy the Painter, "Allan-a-Dale," "Captain Bay," and that poaching song "In Thorney Moor Woods." A pleasant air as from Bohemia seems to steal into the mind with the memory of those early feasts; the atmosphere and tone of which were healthy and wholesome as they are to this day. When, in years after, at one of these suppers, we drank to the health of the veteran leader-writer of the "Manchester Guardian," our member, Mr. H. M. Acton, I remember how, referring to the Bohemian conditions out of which the Club sprang, and the spirit of good fellowship which obtained in tavern coterie of literary men and journalists, he quoted those well-known lines:—

Our incomes were very uncertain,  
Our prospects were equally vague;  
But the people we pity who know not the city,  
The beautiful city of Prague.

The founders were all living then, a half-dozen of them, of whom Joseph Chattwood, the first president, was the chief, and they all played their parts in the Christmas comedy. Chattwood was of dignified presence in the chair, outwardly reminding one of Christopher North, and as oracular in his judgments as Dr. Johnson, but kind-hearted and genial withal. John Page, other-

wise known as Felix Folio, likewise a man of considerable girth and stature, was our Father Christmas, a part which he continued to play for many subsequent years, until failing health compelled him to lay aside his holly wreath, his scarlet robe, and wand. Upon others, in succession, his mantle has fallen—Percy, Sales, Crosland, and Redfern, big men, most of them, as befits the part, with a disposition in the playing of it to come as near as possible to the original. He it was who, as long as he was able, brought boughs of holly and mistletoe to garnish the room; green boughs under which nobody could ever sit melancholy. One of the most memorable suppers was the one held in after years at the Grosvenor—for the Club in its career has found shelter in many hostels—when we made him the guest of the evening, and the portrait of him in his great character, painted by our member, Mr. J. H. E. Partington, was unveiled amid the acclamation of his friends, one feature of the evening being that the real Father Christmas stood for comparison of resemblance beside the canvas that showed him in counterfeit presentment. It hangs in the club-room still, somewhat fallen in splendour from its early colour, but honoured beyond all other pictures at Christmas time, when it is seen suspended behind the president's chair, wreathed with green leaves and guarded by javelin men.

Charles Hardwick, the bursar of the Club, was scarcely less notable in the part he played in the revels, dear and ancient Charles, as he has affectionately been termed, to be described further in words which one has elsewhere used, as antiquarian, historian, archæologist, artist, and art-critic, Odd-fellow and good-fellow both, with a mind crammed with knowledge ancient and modern, and of conversational powers illimitable and free-flowing. It was his delight on these occasions to recite "An Ode to Christmas," which came from the pen of his dear friend Eliza Cook. One can see him now as he rose in his place with that divine, plain face of his all aglow with a fine enthusiasm, for with him the deliverance of the ode was invested with something of the sacredness of a religious ceremonial. With what fervour of diction he rolled out the lines beginning thus:—

Here's merry Christmas come again,  
With all it ever used to bring  
The mistletoe and carol strain!

Never a supper was held at which he could be present to the end of his life without this poetical address, and when his voice was hushed, though the perpetuation of it was attempted by others, it proved ineffectual. When the Club attained its majority he was the guest chosen for the annual feast, and it is a matter of recorded history how, in proposing the toast of his health, the present Nestor of the Club, who for near thirty years has been the presiding genius in these revels—President Milner conferred that classic name on him—and as one who would fall into the arms of another, concluded his eulogium with the words which Shakspeare puts into Hector's mouth: "Let me embrace thee, good old Chronicle that hast so long walked hand in hand with time. Most reverend Nestor, I am glad to clasp thee!"

Of the choicest of choice spirits of the earlier time was Edwin Waugh, in whose composition there was the most exquisite blend of pathos and humour. His very presence was inspiring. Garbed in a style suggestive of the Ettrick shepherd, he brought with him the breezy and invigorating freshness of the moorlands; he brought also to the table the dialect of the county in its most expressive form at a time when it entered more largely into literary conversation than it does now. In him one seemed to recognise the embodiment of the Christmas influence in its essence. He had written about it in prose and verse, and had made us guests in other hostelries at Christmas feasts, where stories, jests, and songs abounded. In "Snowed Up" I had sat with him on a wild night in the White House, that moorland inn on Blackstone Edge, and in his "Told by the Winter Fire" had spent Christmas Eve, under like conditions, in a country inn on the slope of Waddington Fell, and in "Owd Cronies" had mingled with a curious company of Christmas roysterers gathered together at the Boar's Head in Middleton. Some of his Christmas carols, which he mingled in these sketches with ruder materials, are delicately sweet. Take, for instance, that one which the child sings, beginning thus:—

Long time ago in Palestine,  
Upon a wintry morn,  
All in a lowly cattle shed  
The Prince of Peace was born.  
His parents they were simple folk,  
And simple lives they led,  
And in the ways of righteousness  
This little Child was bred.



Or that other one which comes like a benediction at the end of  
"Snowed Up":—

Come, all ye weary wanderers,  
Beneath the wintry sky.  
This day forget your worldly cares,  
And lay your sorrows by.  
Awake and sing,  
The bells do ring,  
For this is Christmas morning.

Waugh was a teller of humorous stories at the table, and a sweet singer of his own songs withal. On occasion he would bring a new song, but those that pleased us best were old favourites, "The Grindlestone," "Sweetheart Gate," and "When drowsy daylight's drooping e'e," more familiarly known as "My Mary." The strains of these come back with the memories of many feasts, none of which could be a failure if Waugh was there and could be induced to sing or tell a story. In the latter connection his friend Ben Brierley depicted him well when he spoke of "that twinkle of the eye, that peculiar way he had of raising the eyebrows, and that sidelong glance when preparing to tell a story that was sure to set the table on a roar."

He was the first among the founders to be made a special guest at our suppers. It was at the Palatine we entertained him, and I think it was on that occasion, when entering the club-room, I heard a waiter making enquiry of another as to the nature of the entertainment. "It should be a dinner," was the reply, "but times is bad, and they calls it a supper." Our poet was not in good health, and told us that if he was to be under the moon much longer he must avoid all excitement; but, in response to an enthusiastic demonstration, he rose to the occasion and sang his song and made his modest little speech, in which he confessed that if he didn't get any more, "he had had his share of the jollities of mankind, of cakes and ale and junketings." To Benjamin Brierley—we always called him Ben—I have already referred, rugged, honest "Ab-o'th'-Yate," with his strong, clean-shaven, furrowed face, and dialect accent of speech, that came in jerky utterances, suffused with a humour all his own. In dialect writing, and in many other ways, Waugh and Brierley were as literary twins, whose names were household words by Lancashire ingle-nooks, with detectable differences, but each was a master in his own degree. At one of our suppers

Ben Brierley told us that in founding the Club he and his friends had tried to follow the lines of the old Savage Club, of which he had been a frequent guest. Like Waugh, he told us stories and sang his own songs, notably, and with dramatic effect, that of "The Wayvor of Wellbrook," or he would give us of his prose, of which "Catching a Weasel" was a good specimen. He loved these social gatherings, and when he could not be a guest he would send us a kindly letter, always accompanied by some seasonable and original verses, such as "A Christmas Greeting," "Think of the Poor," or a lay for "Christmas Morn." He, too, had a supper in his honour, which appropriately followed that given to Waugh, and the president sat between the two humorists. Another honour awaited him after his death. Of those who have taken part in our Christmas carousals, and who still survive, four have been knighted, upon two the freedom of the city has been conferred, while others have secured honorary degrees from the city's University. It does not yet appear what distinctions await them after their departure, but hitherto Ben Brierley is the only one who has had a statue erected to his memory.

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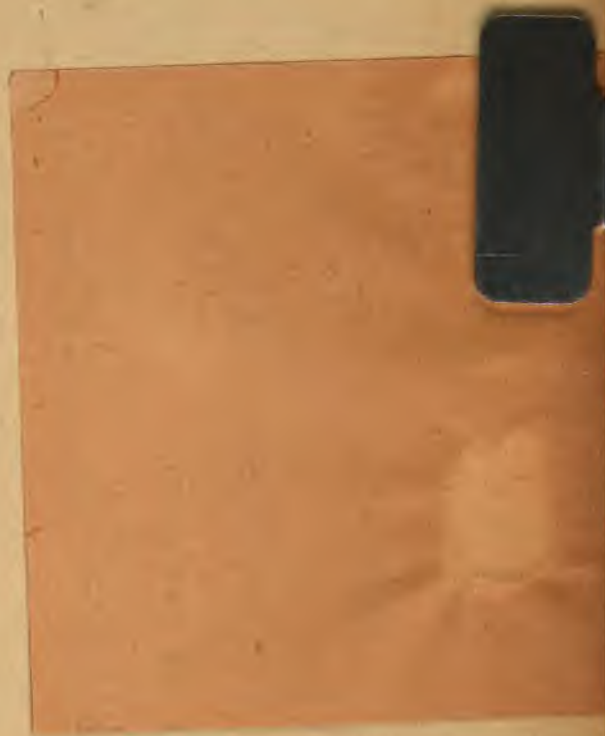
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